

*TO the Kings most Excellent Maiefty, the Lords Spirituall and Temporall,  
and Commons in this present Parliament assembled.*

*The humble Petition of Thomas Stanley.*

**M O S T   G R A T I O U S   S O V E R A I G N E,**

**T**His great grievance presented vnto your Maiefty and this most honorable high Court of Parliament is for the reliefe of the poore, miserable, sicke, sore and distressed members of Christ Iesus which now doe troupe and swarme in and about the Citie of London as former ages were neuer acquainted; with besides a number of lewde and idle people resorting to this Citie, which line by cheating, listring and stealing, and make a pray of Citizens goods, as is too well knowne, and grievously felt London (dread Soueraigne) is as the meane Ocean whither these lewde people resort vnto; and *Middelfix* and *Surrey* are as two armes of the Ocean feeding the same, for remedying which mischiefs and inconuenience. There was by the Honourable Citie of London in the yeere of our Lord God, 1552. a deuise made for reliefe of all the poore, the sturdy vacabond, the ydle beggar, and such prisoners as were quit at the Sessions as were within the said Citie: and they found three manner of poore that were to be prouided for.

1. By impotency, 2. Casualty, 3. By vntimeliness,	} And each of these were divided into three kinds	} By impotency.	1. The fatherlesse, or poore mans child,	} By casualty	1. The wounded Souldier, or hurt person.	} By vntimeliness,	1. The Rioter,
2. The maymed, blind, or lame,			2. The decayed Householder.		2. The Vacatound.		
			3. The leaper, he which had the falling-sicknes.		3. The person visited with the plague.		3. The ydle person.

For the reliefe of all these nine feuerall sorts of poore, faire houses were founded and given to the Lord Maior, Citizens and Comminalty of the Citie of London, with great lands and reuenwes thereto belonging by Religious Kings, your Maiesties Progenitors.

1. *Christs Hospitall.*

Was prouided for the poore fatherlesse child that he might be harboured, clothed, fed, taught, and vertuously brought vp.

2. *Saint Thomas Hospitall.*

Was prouided for the miserable aged, sore and sicke persons, and the same to harbour, and by Physicke and Surgery to cure.

3. *Bridewell Hospitall.*

Was prouided to be a house of Occupations, wherein as well the child, when he is brought vp, and growne to yeeres, and found vnapt to Learning, and no honest person desireth or would haue his seruice, may there be exercised or occupied; as also the sore, and sicke when they be cured in *St. Thomas Hospitall*, may not be suffered to wander in the Common-wealth as they haue beene accustomed: but shall in *Bridewell* be set on worke and there exercised and not be set at liberty, and from a sicke Begger make a whole Thiefe. And to these should be brought the sturdy and ydle, and such persons as are quit at the Sessions, that there they may be set to labour.

King *Edward* the sixt likewise gaue to the said Hospitall of *Bridewell*, all the implements and household-stuffe of the said House of *Bridewell*, and all manner of householdstuffe vtensils and necessities which did belong to the Hospitall of the *Sauoy* being of great value, and foure hundred & fiftie pounds by the yeere. The same time was given to *Bridewell* & *S. Thomas Hospitall*, now worth as is supposed, yearly foure thousand pound, and besides great Lands and Legacies ouer and aboue the saide Kings Grant, haue beene and are given with the Rents of the House of *Bridewell* as now they make it seauen or eight hundred pound by the yeere as shall be proued.

Some reasons moued the Petitioner to exhibite this information: first, whatsoeuer is done to or for the Poore, the Lame, the Widow, and Fatherlesse, is done to Christ himselfe, and hee is able and will repay it: besides the Petitioner being of great age, and small time to continue in this world, hauing all the Motives and Causes of the true discouery of the Foundation of *Bridewell* deliuered vnto him by that Reverend deceased great Patriot of his Country, the Lord Chiefe-Iustice *Popham* commaunding the Petitioner if he liued vntill a Parliament he should exhibite them to the said house, for that he could thinke of no assured way but by Parliament rightly to establish the two Hospitals of *Bridewell* and *St. Thomas* in *Southwarke*, that those great Lands, summes of money, and other charitable Legacies given to the said two Houses. May be employed according as it was intended by the first Foundations and Doners thereof, So hauing done my duty as farre as in me lyeth. First, to God, to my Prince and Country, and to that Honourable deceased Person, In all submission I leaue the rest to your High Maiesty, and graue, great and most Noble consideration of this Honourable Parliament, daily praying God to moue their hearts (among the great and waighy affaires of this Kingdom) to take compassion of the poore, and rectifie these Hospitals, and that your most excellent Maiesty will Eye the poore Creatures with compassion. And bee vnto them as that good King your Grandfather was to his Subiects the poore mans King.

*Hospitalls*

*London*

